

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed September 17, 2004. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested for the following reasons.

Claims 4-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the Office Action asserts that certain language in claims 4-6, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 15 renders the claims unclear. Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful review of the claims. Applicants have amended claims 4-15 to address the issues raised by the Office Action, and to correct other informalities. Independent claims 4, 5 and 9 have also been reformatted to reflect a more conventional form. All claims are now believed to be in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112

Applicants wish to point out that in dependent claims 8, 11 and 15, the limitation “an expanded flexible material” is not the same as the limitation “flexible elastic material” recited in base claims 4, 6 and 5, respectively. The difference is discussed, for example, on page 20, line 9 through page 21, line 6 of the specification. As such, different language has been used for the different claim limitations. Applicants submit that there is no confusion between the two claim terms since they use different words, and no further amendment is needed.

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The Abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it includes improper phraseology. As requested by the Office Action, the Abstract has been amended. In view of the above amendments, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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